



URBAN TREE CONNECTION


Urban Tree Connection

Urban Tree Connection (UTC) has received \$455,000 from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) since 2013, including its most recent grant of \$55,000 from the [2020-2021 grants cycle](#).

CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 2020-2021 GRANTEES			
Diocese	Grantee	Issue Area	Grant
Archdiocese of Philadelphia	Urban Tree Connection	Agriculture	60,000.00

The problem with Urban Tree Connection is that it is actively engaged with and promotes the Party for Socialism and Liberation, has organizational values reflecting Marxist ideals, and its executive director is a Marxist.

[Urban Tree's executive director](#) is Noelle Warford (nee Velan).


URBAN TREE CONNECTION

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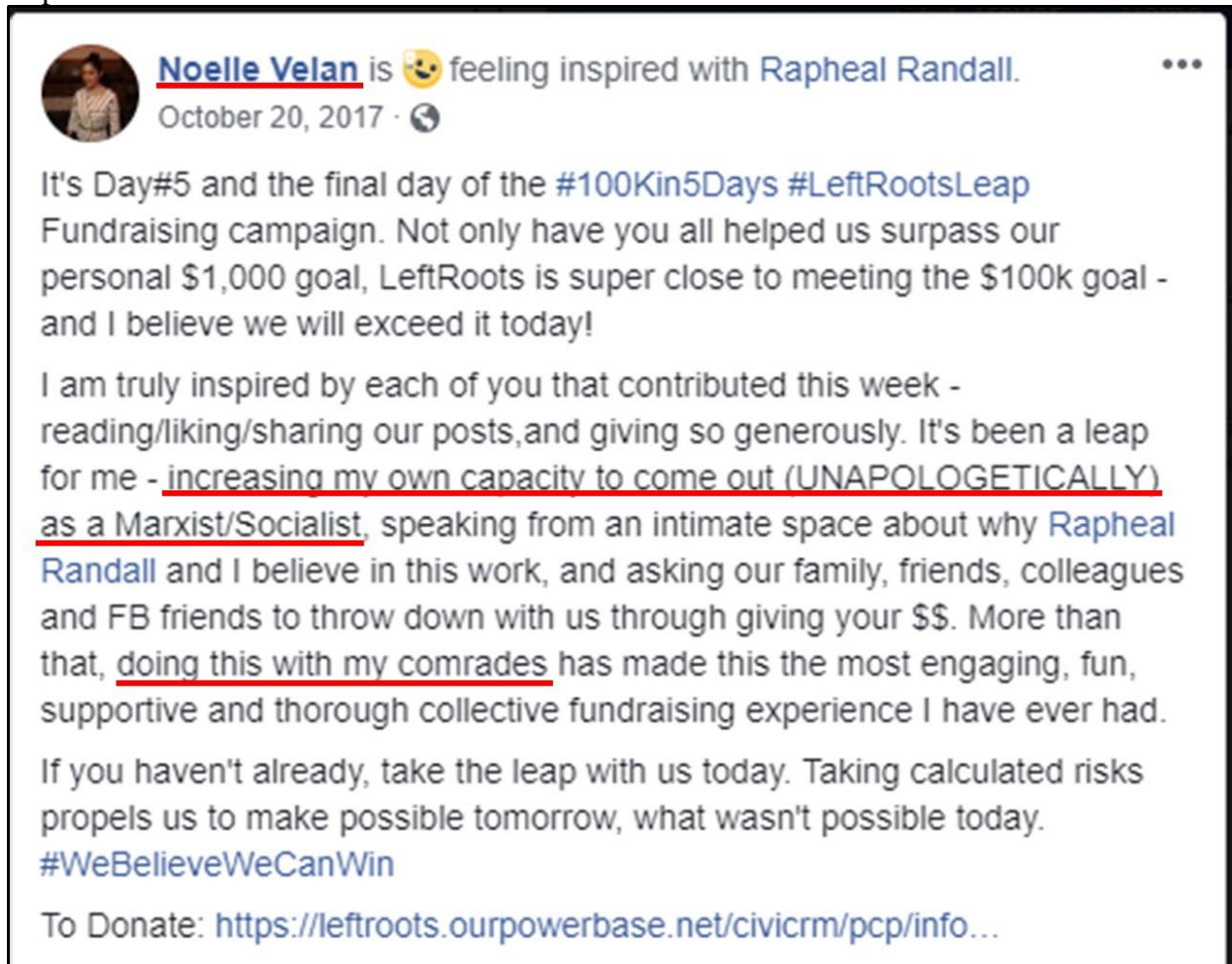
Noelle Warford, Executive Director
noelle@urbantreeconnection.org

Jen Ruiz, Office Manager
jen@urbantreeconnection.org

Michael Jones, Community Land Stewardship Coordinator
mike@urbantreeconnection.org

In 2017, she talked about the Left Roots Leap campaign, hoping to meet the campaign's \$100,000 goal. In the post she tagged her husband/partner (it's unclear what the nature of the

relationship is) Rapheal Randall, saying that she is "increasing my capacity to come out (UNAPOLOGETICALLY) as a Marxist/Socialist, speaking from an intimate space about why Rapheal Randall and I believe in this work."



[Noelle Velan's facebook page](#) is locked up, but her husband/partner is still fairly active in his promotion of outright communism.

To establish the relationship between the two, just to make it clear that this is an intimate relationship, on [October 29, 2021](#), Randall posted his farewell speech to Youth United for Change, and in it, he referred to Noelle as his "partner," closing his remarks to her by saying, "I love you." On [September 14, 2022](#), Randall posted a photo of him with Noelle.



Randall's photos on facebook are filled with the promotion of outright Communism, and while these posts and images are not Noelle's, given the nature of the relationship between the two of them, and her own post about being a Marxist/Socialist, there is no reason NOT to believe that these posts reflect a shared ideology.

On [August 24, 2022](#), Randall posted an image with a hammer and sickle (the symbol of Soviet communism) with the words, "Keep Calm and Seize the Means of Production."



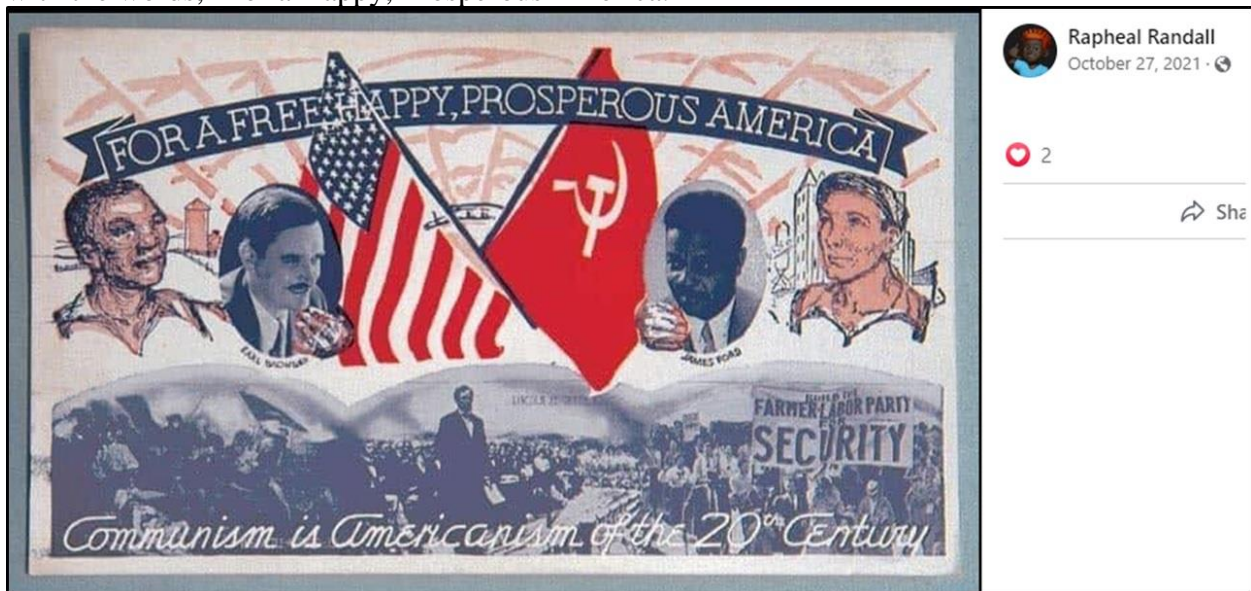
Rapheal Randall
August 24 · 🌐

11

Like

Ying-sun Ho
get excited! 😄
Like 10w

On [October 27, 2021](#), Randall posted an image of the Soviet and American flags waving together with the words, "For a Happy, Prosperous America."

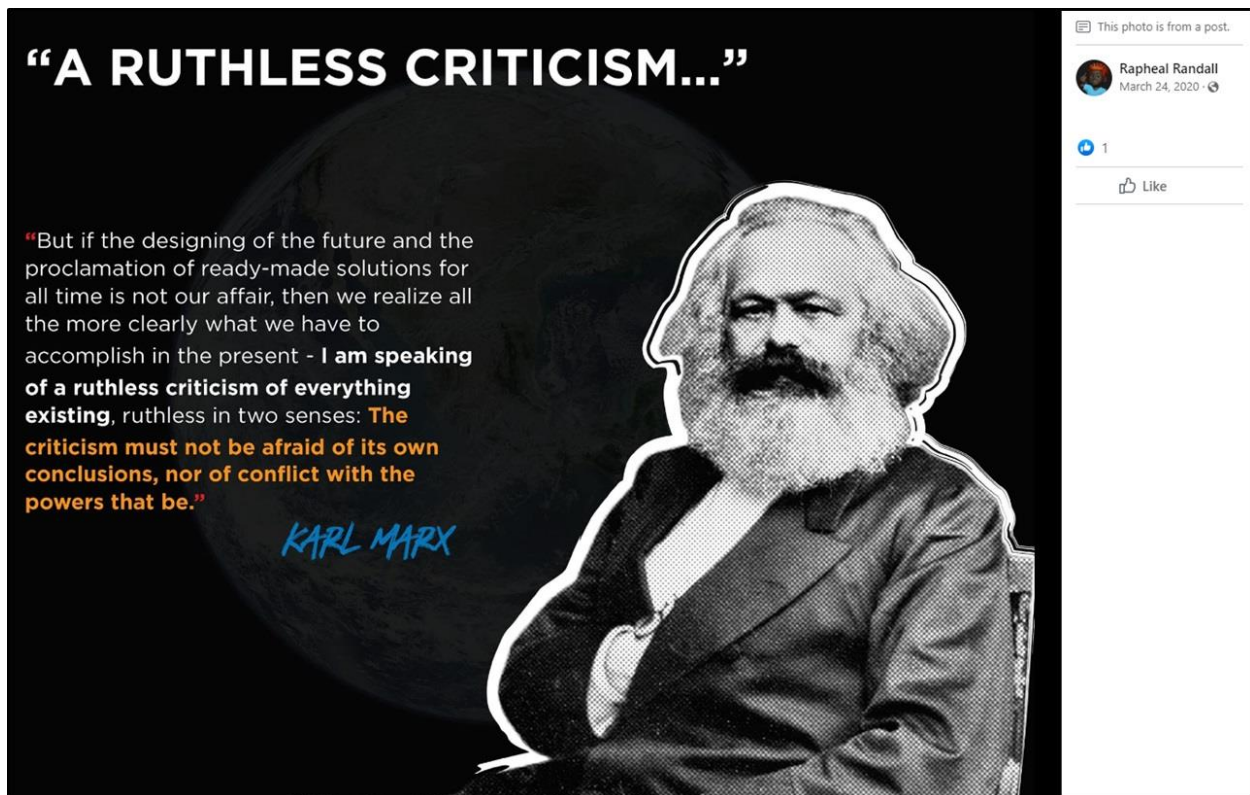


Rapheal Randall
October 27, 2021 · 🌐

2

Share

On [March 24, 2020](#), Randall posted an image of Karl Marx and a quote from Marx about critical theory.



The point here is to establish a possible explanation for what we are going to reveal next, which is the working relationship between Urban Tree Connection and the Party for Socialism and Liberation.

On [July 22, 2022](#), UTC promoted an event being held by the Party for Socialism and Liberation, a thoroughly Marxist organization, echoing Marxist talking points saying:

"This Summer the Philadelphia Liberation Center (the Philly branch of the Party for Socialism and Liberation) will be running several Block Parties throughout the city. The events are a chance for working class communities to come together and find unity, solidarity and joy in the working-class struggle."

At the end of the post, UTC encouraged donations to the Party for Liberation and Socialism, linking to its GoFundMe campaign.



Urban Tree Connection

July 22 · 🌍



This Summer the Philadelphia Liberation Center (the Philly branch of the Party for Socialism and Liberation) will be running several Block Parties throughout the city. The events are a chance for working class communities to come together and find unity, solidarity and joy in the working-class struggle. The first of these Block Parties will be happening at Memorial Garden on August 6th! There will be food, music, kids' activities, and liberatory speakers. More details on the event to come!

The Liberation Center is asking for donations to help make this Block Party and others happen. This will help fund food, supplies and activities for the events. You can support by visiting: tinyurl.com/PLCBlockParties



On [August 1, 2022](#), Urban Tree posted an advertisement for the PSL block party, showing both PSL's logo along with Urban Tree's, indicating that it is a joint effort.



Urban Tree Connection
August 1



...

UTC and PSL's (Party for Socialism and Liberation) Community Solidarity Block Party at Memorial Garden is happening this Saturday from 12pm to 4pm. This event is part of Memorial Garden's long history of being a space for community connections and organizing. This week we'll be highlighting the history and importance of the garden to the Haddington community and the neighbors who live around it.

Ms. Lemoyne has lived in Haddington for decades and is one of the founders of Memorial Garden. These pictures tell the story of why she came to found the garden in her own words.

ID 1: Ms. Lemoyne on the History of Memorial Garden: "Me and another block captain..... Cleared out the space (Memorial Garden) by hand. See my son had been murdered there and I just wanted the space to mean something, and to remember him -Ms. Lemoyne, Founder of Memorial Garden

ID 2: A picture of the sign at Memorial Garden which reads: Memorial Garden. This garden is dedicated to children and adults whose lives were lost to violence. Underneath the picture is the hashtag, No development without community input

ID 3: community solidarity block party. August 6th. Cookout, music and children's activities.



On [August 10, 2022](#), Urban Tree posted an image and quote from Michaela Kay, a lead organizer with the Party for Socialism and Liberation, saying, "The Party of Socialism and Liberation's (PSL) daily reflection on Black August has been a great reminder of why this work is important."



Urban Tree Connection



August 10 · 🌐



UTC continually works toward the liberation of Black Folks everywhere. But for many of us in the UTC community the commemoration of [#BlackAugust](#) is a time to reflect and rededicate ourselves to the work of liberation. The Party of Socialism and Liberation's (PSL) daily reflection on Black August has been a great reminder of why this work is important and how it carries on the traditions set forth by our ancestors.

From PSL: Today on August 10th, we will hear from Michaela Kay. Michaela is a lead organizer with the Party for Socialism and Liberation, as well as a data scientist, researcher and behavioral health educator in New York City. When Michaela was asked why Black August is important to her, she said "Black August to me...represents the historic, undying revolutionary spirit of all the oppressed Nations this country has routinely kidnapped, imprisoned, and forced into slave labor for generations. Recognizing Black August is recognizing the centuries of rebellion, from the first enslaved Africans, and also signifies the rising tide against the prison industrial complex, in the age of mass incarceration."

BLACK AUGUST CALENDAR SERIES

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AUG
10

“

**MICHAELA
KAY**

PSL



On [August 31, Urban Tree Connection](#) again posted a message from the Party for Socialism and Liberation saying, "this quote is a great reminder that the fight for liberation and freedom of others and ourselves remains constant no matter the time of year."



On the last day of Black August this quote is a great reminder that the fight for liberation and freedom of others and ourselves remains constant no matter the time of year.

From the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL): Today on the last day of Black August, we will hear from Kerbie Joseph. Kerbie is a first-generation Haitian woman from Brooklyn, NY and first became a community organizer with the ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) Coalition. Kerbie has been organizing since the age of 19 in NYC against police brutality, mass incarceration, housing insecurity and LGBTQ oppression. Kerbie has organized and led actions in solidarity to police brutality victims all over the country. Kerbie is one of the lead organizers in the Justice for Akai Gurley Family campaign which led to a guilty verdict by a jury against the police officer responsible for Akai Gurley's murder in 2014 and a street being named in Akai's honor in the neighborhood he was killed by the NYPD in East New York. Kerbie continues to help police brutality families honor their stolen loved ones with co-named streets all over NYC. Kerbie currently works at the Audre Lorde Project as the Safe OUTSide the System's program coordinator.

When Kerbie was asked why Black August month was important to her, she responded "Black August reminds us that we all have the potential to be an organizer, to be a leader, to be a revolutionary for our liberation and that in fact, it is our duty to fight back in whatever capacity that we can. Black August month and the ancestors that we call our heroes- ground us in the understanding that even in the bleakness of bondage, in the darkness of oppression- there will always be the fire of resistance."

ID: A picture of a Black woman holding a megaphone. Next to the picture is the following quote: "Black August reminds us that we all have the potential to be an organizer, to be a leader, to be a revolutionary for our liberation and that in fact, it is our duty to fight back in whatever capacity that we can. Black August month and the ancestors that we call our heroes- ground us in the understanding that even in the bleakness of bondage, in the darkness of oppression- there will always be the fire of resistance."



Given what we've discovered regarding UTC's connections with the Party for Socialism and Liberation and the professed Marxist/Socialism of its executive director, we can now come to understand one of the stated organizational values of Urban Tree Connection as expressed in its "[Who We Are & What We Are About](#)" document. Article II of the document is "Our Organizational Values," and point two of these values is:

"Solidarity: We are part of a greater, global social movement and ecosystem. **We stand with other like-minded organizations,** formations and people fighting **against** the destructive forces that are **hetero-patriarchy,** racism and **capitalism.**"

The term "hetero-patriarchy" is commonly used to refer to any Father-centered ideology that stands against LGBTQ ideologies. And the bold statement against "capitalism" gives rise to the corollary ... UTC stands for Socialism. And given its leadership and relationship with the Party for Socialism and Liberation, this appears very much to be the case.

Conclusion

Urban Tree Connection is a Marxist organization espousing Marxist ideologies, which are completely and thoroughly condemned by the Catholic Church. This organization should never have been considered for a grant to begin with.